

# Christmas Books

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### JURGEN

*Jurgen, a Comedy of Justice.* By James Branch Cabell. With an Introduction by Hugh Walpole. Lane. 25s. net.

We might never have heard of this remarkable romance had our attention not been drawn to it by the blush it has called forth on the chaste countenance of Columbia. The name of its author had scarcely crossed the Atlantic—although that caustic critic, Mr. Mencken, had told us that Mr. Cabell is the only Southern prose writer who can actually write—when the newspapers rang out with the announcement that his fifteenth book had come under the censure of the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. Then everybody began to talk about it, and to wish to see it. If the verdict of New York appeared to us to be justified, we need hardly assure our readers that we should have preserved silence on the subject. But this is a case in which an excessive prudery has defeated its own ends. We will not be unfair to the delicacy of New York. We are ready to admit that the author of 'Jurgen' has occasionally wrapped his symbolism in garments a little too gauzy for a northern climate. But we are not sure that we should have observed this blemish if the enthusiasts had not dotted the i's and underlined the epithets so vociferously. 'Jurgen' is a harmless and beautiful romance, very whimsical and absurd, but incapable of injuring the moral health of any grown-up person. We have no sympathy with the zeal which attempts to destroy a book of genuine merit because it is supposed to offend occasionally against some of the conventions.

The sub-title of the book is not very happy; we have to reflect on what Mr. Cabell means by calling it "a comedy of justice." 'Jurgen' is simply a romance, and of the most typical order. The first requisite of a story of this ancient kind is that it should give us the record of a quest. There must be a hero, and he must go forth into the world of adventure to seek something. The motive of 'Jurgen' is the quest for imaginative enjoyment on the part of a mind incapable of complete satisfaction but exquisitely sensitive to pleasure. In the country of Poictesme there lives a middle-aged pawnbroker named Jurgen, who is married to a shrew who bullies him. His life is very dull and humdrum, but he is privately a poet, and he cultivates his dreams. One night, as he goes home, he reproves a monk for cursing the Devil, who (the Cistercian declares) has placed a stone in his way on purpose that he might trip over it. Jurgen says that no one ought to curse "the divinely appointed Prince of Darkness," and he falls into a high commendation of Satan. He passes on, until a black gentleman salutes him, and thanks him; Jurgen is the first person who has ever said a kind word for the principle of evil. When he reaches home, Jurgen finds that his wife, Dame Lisa, has disappeared, and this is the first evidence he has that the Devil has taken him under his protection. Urged by her relations, Jurgen thinks it proper to start on a search for Lisa, and he finds her on the wolds of Morven turned into a witch. She lures him into a cave, where he finds the Centaur Nessus, who greets him with extreme affability, and wraps the famous robe of gorgeous tissue around his shoulders. Jurgen leaps on to the back of

the beautiful monster, and they gallop away on the quest of enjoyment.

The adventures which await the glorified pawnbroker in the world of dreams are too numerous and too desultory to be recounted here. As is proper in a romance of this species, the story moves on from one impossible situation to another in kaleidoscopic fashion, incident following incident without progress or development. Jurgen, of course, regains his youth and the powers which accompany strong youthful vitality. He meets with farcical interruptions, but he overcomes them all before they have time to become tragical. He meets with the spirit of devastation, whose name is Seveda, who is conquered by his fascinating manners, and consents to become his god-mother. Then we pass into a sort of parody of the world of the Round Table, and Jurgen becomes the Duke of Logrens; he meets with the mysterious Anaitis, who reveals to him all the wonders of the amatory art. It should be said at once that, in 'Jurgen' as in all normal romances of the Arthurian class, the preponderating motive is the love-interest. The hero passes on into the land of Cocaigne, where he complies with the customs of the country, which are of an extraordinary character, but do not daunt the spirit of Jurgen in the least. He is prepared, as he frequently asserts, to drink of any beverage once. Presently he descends on a wheelbarrow into Hell, and he climbs up a cobwebby ladder into Heaven. Wherever he finds himself he is imperturbable and thirsty for enjoyment. But the thirst proves insatiable, and he discovers that all the charms of beauty, strength and inviolable youth are insufficient to drive away the haunting shadow of ennui.

The technical form of this romance deserves attention. Under the disguise of a reckless spirit of fun, Mr. Cabell conceals, or half-conceals, a remarkable erudition. 'Jurgen' is the result on a fantastic imagination of familiarity with a hundred books. There is something here of "Pantagruel" and not a little of the "Gesta Romanorum"; Spain has been rifled for hints of "Amadis de Gaule." In its profusion of all things incredible and magnificent, it is akin to the twelfth-century French romances, but it has still more of the voluptuousness of Provence. Most of all, however, 'Jurgen' takes its form from the milder parts of the 'Morte d'Arthur.' It is far, however, from being an imitation or a pastiche; it has a curious Rabelaisian violence of its own, and belongs to the Renaissance quite as much as to the Middle Ages. As a rule, the author gives himself up to the caprice of his topsy-turvy imagination, and slips without apparent purpose from one impossible episode to another. Near the end of the story, however, we find him suddenly launching into satire of the Philistine America of our own day. It is as though he had a premonition of the fate which was attending his roguish pagan book. A great "tumble-bug" comes into court to give evidence against Jurgen as being "offensive and lewd and lascivious and indecent." For the moment we leave the empires of Cocaigne and Barathrum, and find ourselves in a New York court of justice, from which we are glad to escape, since, though Mr. Cabell's sarcasms are effective, we prefer to follow him through his tangles of incomparable dreams.

### THE RIGHT KIND OF PIRATES

*Howard Pyle's Book of Pirates.* Compiled by Merle Johnson. Harper. 21s. net.

THE late Mr. Howard Pyle, himself a Philadelphia Quaker, was a genuine amateur of piratical lore. He wrote capital pirate stories for the American maga-

zines and illustrated them, as well as other people's pirate tales, in an entirely satisfying way. Mr. Johnson has now collected in a handsome volume seven of Pyle's own stories, a historical sketch of West Indian buccaneering, and some three dozen pictures in colour or in black-and-white, and the result is a book that will go straight to the heart of every boy, old or young, who knows what is what in this particular line. For Pyle's Pirates are a proprietary article whose quality can be trusted as always up to sample. They are the real goods, the quintessential stuff of traditional romance. If the pirates of the Spanish Main were not exactly like these pirates they ought to have been, and in so far as they were not they were inferior. Pyle's Pirates may be relied upon to have the right murderous looks, wear the right flamboyant garb, carry the right weapons, haunt the right places, commit all the right infamies and treacheries, amass the right kinds of treasure, bury it in the right spots, sail and fight the right types of ships, drink the right liquors out of the right bottles, and die the right deaths. In fact there is nothing wrong about Pyle's Pirates except their morals, and these are so very wrong as to leave nothing to be desired. The drawings are just as right as the text, and some of the pictures—galleons, and torrid sandy spits, and a ship lighting up the sky and the faces of a boat's crew with the glare of her conflagration—have a real beauty. Of the stories, we like best 'The Ghost of Captain Brand' for the thrilling atmosphere of romance and mystery in which it opens, and 'Captain Scarfield,' who contrived to double the parts of a pious Pennsylvanian merchant and the feral skipper of the schooner *Bloodhound*. But every proper English boy will note with satisfaction Mr. Pyle's certificate that of all the pirates who ever terrorised the Caribbean the boldest and most dreadful were English.

#### STORIES FOR BOYS

*A Dog of the Wilds*, by George S. Surrey (Milford, 6s. net), is a fine story, written with much spirit and descriptive power. The "wilds" are located in Northern Canada. The "dog," otherwise Samson, is a "husky" of enormous strength and courage, but horribly ill-tempered, owing to the abominable misusage of a miscreant who in the end meets a most fitting retribution. Samson is rescued from his dire bondage by a dog-loving young prospector, who lays himself out to win the creature's affection, and after long perseverance obtains a devotion almost without limit.

Adventurous youths meetly provided with adventure are what we expect from Mr. Herbert Strang; and both these characteristics are prominent in *No Man's Island* (Milford, 6s. net). Three lads on a boating expedition in Wessex, discover and unmask, at great risk to themselves, a gang of scoundrels engaged in the manufacture of foreign bank notes. These criminals are all of Continental origin, but Mr. Strang has magnanimously assigned them to more or less friendly nationalities. We have not found the narrative, to any appreciable extent, productive of thrills. But a jaded reviewer's experience is no criterion for the fresh mentality of childhood.

*The Last of the Barons*, by E. A. Wyke Smith (Milford, 5s. net) has not, as the title might suggest, any connection with the Kingmaker or Bulwer Lytton. The date falls between the Norman Conquest and Roger Bacon. The theme is a crusade undertaken by three boys for the removal of a wicked nobleman closely resembling Front de Boeuf in 'Ivanhoe.' The writing, apparently modelled on Mark Twain's 'Yankee at the Court of King Arthur,' is sufficiently good of its kind, and there is no flagging in the action. The imprisoned lady whose tongue makes even her diabolical captor quail is a humorous, and we think, original conception.

Throughout *The Old Order*, by Hylton Cleaver (Milford, 6s. net), we recognise the touch of a born storyteller. But frankly, we do not quite believe either in

sleepy old-world "Abbot's School" or in the devoted hobbledehoy who cannot tear himself away till he has fulfilled his mission to the place. On the other hand, the three brothers renowned severally for cricket, boating and swimming and welcomed by a reforming under-master as the bringers of new blood, are sufficiently natural in their youthful "swank" to be really agreeable company. But when they prove to have been expelled from their previous school for betting, and to be bent on introducing this nefarious practice into Abbot's, we become once more incredulous. The illustrations are exceptionally spirited.

A missing Charter of great importance to the welfare of an old Foundation. A conscientious but thin-skinned head-boy suspected in connection with its disappearance on much the same grounds as the hero of 'The Moonstone.' A new house-master endowed with every virtue except a practical knowledge of "Rugger." Such are the principal factors in *The Deputy Captain*, by Richard Bird (Milford, 6s. net). The result is a mildly entertaining scholastic romance. The 'Hooligan Times,' with its Bolshevik leaders and very personal paragraphs, is pleasing, though a little too good to be true.

There is a literal side to the title of *In the Scrum*, by Walter Rhoades (Milford, 6s. net). But on the whole we take it as referring metaphorically to the hero, Dick Trescott's progress during his first year at school. By his own fault very largely, he starts at cross-purposes with the entire academic population. But gradually he fights his way to an assured position among his fellow boys. It is a regrettable fact that masters do not seem to count either with him or with the author. Yet Dick has a turn for reading, which, unfortunately, only lands him in still deeper trouble.

*Sea Scouts Abroad*, by Percy F. Westerman (Blackie, 5s. net), is a solid, steady going, scarcely brilliant tale. A party of sea scouts achieve (under proper control) a cruise to Havre, and thence by canal and river to Rouen. Naturally, they meet with adventures. The most notable is perhaps that of the aspiring spirit who, relying on his colloquial familiarity with French, is conducted to the police station when his objective is the post office, and receives first aid on declaring himself blest.

Nature-study, concentrated on marine objects was an established pursuit with the young gentlemen who figure in *The Boys of Castle-Cliff School*, by R. A. H. Goodyear (Blackie, 6s. net). They were also strong on cricket, and one enterprising youth, the Honourable Arthur Teale Skellingham commonly known as Art-for-Short, made a speciality of boxing. While acquiring this useful accomplishment he undeservedly incurred the suspicion of frequenting public-houses, and there were not wanting enemies so base as to press the charge. But Art was soon triumphantly cleared.

*That Test Match*, by Sir Home Gordon, Bart. (Duckworth, 6s. net), is a cricket story for boys of all ages. The career of one, Paul Rignold, in the cricket world is followed in detail, from his early days at school up to final triumph when he played for England against the Australians. Everything else in the book is kept subordinate to the cricket interest, which will please all serious followers of the game. *Off His Own Bat*, by St. John Pearce, illustrated by Gordon Browne, R. I. (Ward Lock, 4s. 6d. net), is a school story for boys. The hero is not only a great cricketer, but is made doubly attractive by having a mystery to divulge. He handles the situation dexterously, and gains a well deserved popularity. Another cricket story, with a counter interest in the vindication of a schoolboy's honour, is *Dixie of the Cock House*, by Kent Carr, illustrated by J. R. Burgess (Chambers, 5s. net). The Happy-go-Lucky hero of *Teddy Lester in the Fifth*, by John Finnemore, illustrated by Percy Tarrant (Chambers, 6s. net), with his cheerful knack of outwitting anyone who tries to interfere with him, will endear

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himself to most people. His prowess on the cricket field will delight every boy. *St. Bartholomew's Eve*, a tale of the Huguenot Wars, illustrated by H. J. Draper, *Under Wellington's Command* and *At Agincourt*, both illustrated by Wal. Paget (Blackie, each 4s. 6d. net), are from a new edition of the well-known works of G. A. Henty. *Comrades Ever*, by Escott Lynn, illustrated by Percy Tarrant (Chambers, 6s. net), is a spontaneously written story relating the adventures of some young Englishmen in the German East African campaign of the Great War. Most of the incidents are taken from a soldier's diary and other authentic sources. They make an exciting book. *The Fly-by-Nights*, by Major-General Charles Ross, C.B., D.S.O. (Murray, 7s. 6d. net), describes a post-war England suffering from prohibition. Some young and penniless ex-officers agree to take part in the comparatively innocent business of smuggling alcohol into the country by aeroplane, and afterwards find themselves involved in a Bolshevik plot, which has the much more deadly purpose of supplying England with cocaine. It has all the thrill of a spy story, and excitements come thick and fast before the end. In *The Sky Riders*, by T. C. Bridges, illustrated by G. Henry Evison (Harrap, 6s. net), a couple of airships make possible this tale of wild adventure. Stolen plans, a kidnapped girl, encounters with wild animals and savages, invest it with positively breathless excitement. No one can fail to feel relieved when the villain meets with his just reward.

We scarcely understand Mr. Harold Avery's selection of the title *Schoolboy Pluck* (Nisbet), for his chronicle of Fred Maple's academic career. Fred shows, at least morally, rather a deficiency in courage, by brooding over the fear that his father's status as a professional cricketer will cause him to be socially ostracised. This apprehension happily proves to be unfounded, as regards the majority of his schoolmates, and Fred attains popularity both by his hereditary prowess in the great game, and his other good qualities. His three especial friends are natural and likeable, though not on quite the same lines as the typical schoolboy. The indispensable villain merits praise for devising an original and intriguing piece of mischief.

In *Snuffles for Short* (Nisbet), Miss Christine Chaudler has aimed at demonstrating two reciprocally destructive theories. The first, that a boy is naturally a more unruly animal than a girl, we incline, after some deliberation, to accept. The second, that this *ex hypothesi* inherent masculine quality depends for its existence on the education received, becomes thus obviously untenable, and is indeed contrary to all our experience. That boys will be boys, however managed or mismanaged, we firmly believe. That it is impossible to be a boy without adopting every convention (such as the cult of ugliness in dress), imposed by British wisdom, we are not so entirely persuaded. Poor "Snuffles" has a rough time, while striving, much against his inclination, to qualify for the standard of naughtiness exacted by more virile companions. In fact, his futile efforts to secure a thrashing from a too indulgent aunt drive even a humanitarian reviewer into wishing that this boon may be granted, and extended, on strict principles of sex equality to the detestable little female who aids in inciting him.

#### STORIES FOR GIRLS

*The Flag of the Adventurer*, by Sydney C. Grier (Blackwood, 7s. 6d. net), is a semi-historical story, rather disappointing from the author of 'The Warden of the Marches.' It deals, apparently, with the annexation of Scinde in 1843. But for some unexplained reason, the tribes and localities concerned are disguised under false names, and even Sir Charles Napier becomes "Sir Henry Lennox." We are given plenty of intriguing, fighting, and leading into captivity, and there are some fine scenes. But our interest in the

narrative as a whole is not well sustained. The Early Victorian atmosphere investing the Anglo-Saxon actors in the drama is effectively indicated. The Hibernian eccentricities of the Assistant Resident's wife are decidedly overdone, and our sympathy goes less to her commonplace husband.

*Bitha's Wonderful Year*, by Katharine Tynan (Milford, 5s. net) introduces us to an Irish landholder, who is, naturally, in pecuniary difficulties, and—not quite so naturally—a Roman Catholic. This gentleman lets his ancestral castle to Americans, and comes to London with his seventeen-year-old daughter, a young lady with a pretty taste in floral decoration which proves exceedingly lucrative, and procures her many blue-blooded acquaintances. She meets, in fact, with almost universal appreciation, except from a preternaturally disagreeable aunt and cousin, belonging properly to an older type of fiction. After a year's exile, her father and she are enriched by a most unlikely stroke of good fortune and return triumphantly home. Of such harsh facts as Sinn Fein and the War there is no hint. Mrs. Hinkson's work has always been distinguished rather for charm than probability, and it is not to be expected that she should depart from this rule in a Christmas gift-book.

The central figure in *Peggy's Romance*, by Joan Leslie (Milford, 6s. net), is not Peggy herself, but a child violinist whom she discovers and befriends, first during a holiday stay at Venice, and afterwards in England. The poor little "prodigy" with her carefully inculcated baby language, her artistic temperament, and her incongruous jumble of general knowledge, is an appealing, but not intolerably pathetic figure. The heartless, vulgar and astute pseudoparents who exploit her, are slightly but tellingly sketched. There is a melo-dramatic underplot, culminating in the re-appearance of the authentic father.

Switzerland is the principal theatre selected by Miss Brenda Girvin for the achievement of *Betty the Girl Guide* (Milford, 6s. net). These include the unravelling of a mystery, the unmasking of a bogus commercial enterprise, and the conversion of a crabbed old uncle to belief in the rising generation. Aeroplanes and ski play a large part in the action, which is lively, if not always convincing.

In *Their London Cousins* (Blackie & Son, 6s. net) Miss Lydia Miller Middleton has given us a little of a great many different things, and most of these have the good quality of being quite up to date. Such are the juvenile Americans, outwardly ostentatious, but thorough "sports" at heart, the schoolboy proficient in housework, the woman hospital orderly, at once capable and humane, and the blinded soldier her fiancé. On the other hand, we must set the youthful male genius of murderous temper, and the flapper who weeps over her own excessive beauty and the painful admiration thereby excited.

Miss Angela Brazil is scarcely a feminine Tom Hughes, and her undoubtedly reputation in the school-girl world rests perhaps mainly on those graceful non-scholastic interludes to which she is much addicted. An old fashioned academy in a sleepy Devonshire town near the sea forms the background for *A Fortunate Term* (Blackie & Son, 5s. net). Here two sisters, fresh from a North Country High School, create a new era, alike for teachers and taught. Besides thus exercising a reforming influence, they are deeply interested in the fortunes of a missing heir, who is at last dramatically restored to his rights. But we must in justice admit that the curtain does not fall upon a wedding, nor even upon a betrothal.

*Margery Finds Herself*, by Doris Pocock (Blackie & Son, 5s. net) is the soul history of a spoiled child belonging to that peculiarly virulent type which—in real life—we have hitherto never had the misfortune to encounter. The finding of herself is achieved through her (entirely voluntary) removal to a very modern board-

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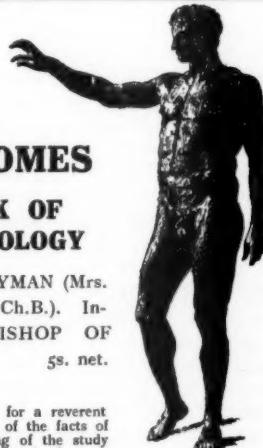
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ing-school. Here she has no hardships of any kind to endure, but the fierce light of a wholesome public opinion is brought to bear with excellent effect on her peculiar failings. The bright, kindly and unsentimental tone of her companions generally is pleasing, and we should judge essentially true to fact. There are one or two extraneous incidents of which the same can hardly be said. But such like expedients are common to writers of school stories, whether male or female.

That microcosm known to outsiders as the "Jane Willard Foundation," and described by Miss Dorita Fairlie Bruce in *Dimsie Moves Up* (Milford, 6s. net), is a healthy cheerful little world, where games have an enormous importance and an "Anti-Soppist League" against undue adoration of teachers and elder girls, flourishes among the juniors. Even lessons are not entirely neglected. Dimsie indeed like a loyal comrade does all she can to stimulate her especial friend into qualifying for the "move-up" which she has herself attained. Some of the Jane Willard ewe lambs are perhaps less white than others, but none could be denounced as black.

The adjective in *The Crimson Ramblers* by Violet Bradby (Milford, 3s. 6d. net) seems to us to be bestowed on somewhat insufficient grounds. The ramblers, or caravanners, in question are a party of young people in their teens and under, vaguely chaperoned by an adult artist. Their adventures are not extremely interesting, and even those time honoured devices, the village entertainment and the Rector's scolding wife fail in provoking us to laughter.

We think highly of the modern schoolgirl in most ways, and not least in respect of her pluck and resourcefulness. Yet surely, even for her, three sensational exhibitions of life-saving, within as many months, must be a high average. But the heroine of *The New Prefect*, by Dorothea Moore (Nisbet), is such a charming person, that we neither grudge her laurels in this line, nor cavil at her almost equally arduous achievement in establishing prefectorial government; a measure emanating from a reforming head-mistress, but opposed by a majority in the school. The whole combined makes a pleasant story, lifelike in many details.

The principal characters in Miss Christine Chaundler's school story, *The Fourth Form Detective* (Nisbet), are two engaging flappers bent on emulating the fame of Sherlock Holmes. Their opportunity comes when several articles of value mysteriously disappear, and the expedient on which they resolve is laughable enough. By mere chance they hit on the true solution—which is far from novel—and everyone concerned leaves the Court without a stain on her character.

#### SERIOUS BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

In writing *The Child's Book of France* (Chapman & Hall, 7s. 6d. net) Mr. Sidney Dark, as an Englishman descended from French ancestors, has obviously made it his aim to ensure justice for those splendid qualities which have distinguished the French throughout their history. His zeal is highly laudable, but sometimes carries him to almost ludicrous extremes, as in his indignant protest that a French soldier was never seen to eat frogs during the war. We know at least one British tourist who (before the war certainly) not only saw but imitated, not only survived but approved this deed of terrible daring. In connection with a graver subject, we may be permitted to notice a slight discrepancy between his well merited eulogism on the strength of family affection in France, and his definition of French literary realism as a determination to look facts in the face. It is precisely from this same "relentless realism" that English people in the past have derived their erroneous views of domestic life across the Channel. The inference would seem to be that French realism can, on its own line, depart at least as

far from facts as British optimism, which by the way is not much in evidence at present. We should be doing Mr. Dark grave injustice, however, if we represented his book as simply an apologia. It is, on the contrary, an excellently constructed and reasoned history from the Roman Conquest down to our own day, and should be serviceable not only to children, but to many of larger growth. We applaud the author's constant exhortations to the study of imaginative literature bearing on various periods. But surely 'The Three Musketeers' is rather highly spiced meat for babes? The illustrations are copied from well-known pictures.

That Miss Eleanor Price has a marked instinct for the picturesque and appealing is made obvious by her *Stories from French History* (Harrap, 6s. net). We pass from one brilliant scene to another; or to vary the metaphor we find ourselves spectators at a procession of striking figures extending over well nigh nineteen centuries, with Vercingetorix for leader and Napoleon to close the rear. Miss Price has allowed her imagination a certain amount of free play but not to an illegitimate extent, and she has the wide sympathies essential to a historian. There are several illustrations.

*The Young People's History of the American Revolution*, by Everett T. Tomlinson (Appleton, 10s. 6d.) is well illustrated, chiefly with copies from pictures of more or less early date. But its small type and singularly jumbled binding are detrimental to the reader's comfort. The writing is lucid and sufficiently interesting, and if our own country is presented in an unfavourable light, we are bound to admit that she only gets her deserts.

The teaching of classical mythology to children has always been attended with peculiar difficulties, which the Fathers of the Church were wont to settle by reference to the Satanic element implicit in every Pagan conception of deity. Such robust methods are no longer fashionable. But hand-books like *A Child's Chaplet of Stories from Greek Mythology* (Milford, 3s. net) may leave impressions equally incorrect, though in a contrary sense. We have no hesitation, however, in recommending it, if only for its excellent selection of illustrations. Binding and type are also unexceptionable.

*Letters to my Grandson on the World about him* (Mills & Boon, 4s. net) are addressed by Mr. Stephen Coleridge to the poet's great-great-great-nephew, and contain some sound elementary information on such subjects as astronomy, botany and natural history. The language is simple, though not unduly puerile, but the pervading tone of pious optimism suggests a different mental attitude from that which obtains today. The author allows himself a sly dig at Einstein, and, less openly, at Darwin. But strange to say we have noticed no reference to vivisection.

*The Childrens' Garland of Verse*, gathered by Grace Rhys (Dent, 7s. 6d. net) may be heartily recommended as a gift, not so much for children, as for young people in their teens and a good deal older. It contains about three hundred poems, including such divers items as 'Proud Maisie,' 'Wynken, Blynken and Nod,' 'The Sands of Dee,' 'Say not the struggle nought availeth,' 'Sir Patrick shows,' and 'The White Ship.' The book is well printed and illustrated, but we could have desired an alphabetical index of first lines.

#### PICTURE BOOKS FOR LITTLE PEOPLE

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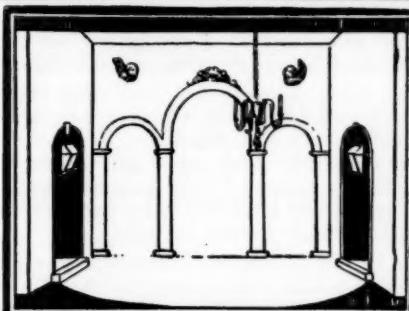
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*Old Time Stories*. Told by Master Charles Perrault. Translated from the French by A. E. Johnson. Illustrated by Heath Robinson. Constable. 15s. net.

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*Seven Peas in a Pod*. By Margaret Bailey. Illustrated by Alice Bolam Preston. Harrap. 6s. net.

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*The Magician's Carpet and the Garden of Enchantment*. By Alice and Clarence Ponting. Mills & Boon. 3s. 6d. net.

These are two fairy stories which are illustrated by photographs. With great ingenuity the photographer gives us presentations of fairies, magicians and gnomes, sufficiently life-like to silence the scoffer for ever—unless he finds out how it is done.

*An Invasion of Fairyland*. By Alice E. Massy-Beresford. With pictures in colour by Jeannie McConnell. Elkin Mathews. 7s. 6d. net.

This book is dedicated to the memory of the writer's son, John Clarina Massy-Beresford, Lieut. Royal Field Artillery. It describes in verse how the demon of Prussianism drove all the fairies away from Germany, whose people had so long cherished and sheltered them. The coloured pictures have considerable charm.

Miss Netta Syrett's imaginative gifts and extensive reading are alike turned to good account in *Rachel and the Seven Wonders* (Thornton Butterworth, 7s. 6d. net). A series of visions, seen through the eyes of an intelligent little modern girl, reproduce the seven wonders above mentioned as they severally appeared to contemporaries. The section devoted to ancient Babylon, its dreamlike gardens, its pomp, its luxury and its weeping Hebrew captives is especially appealing. The pictures, coloured and plain, are well adapted to enhance the illusion which Miss Syrett has aimed at inducing.

Our remarks on the work last noticed will apply almost without alteration to *Toby and the Odd Beasts*, by the same author (Thornton Butterworth, 7s. 6d. net). The hero is in this case a boy, and the things revealed are fabulous beasts, such as the unicorn, phoenix and dragon. The charming illustrations of the gryphon, and of Halcyone with her children deserve especial mention.

Kingsley's 'Water Babies' may possibly have suggested the theme of *The Little House in the Fairy Wood*, by Ethel Cook Eliot (Thornton Butterworth, 6s. net). The hero is a little boy, who finds refuge from ill-treatment among beings other than human. His new companions are creatures of the woodland, and conform to that benevolent and, so to speak, Christianised type,

which has replaced the egotistical fauns and dryads, the malicious elves and fairies, of ancient folk-lore. The child's American origin is made clear, not only by linguistic evidence, but by the detail of his working all day long, at nine years old, in a "canning factory"—a piece of local colour not over creditable to Transatlantic legend.

With some slight change in the human dramatis personæ, *The House above the Trees*, also by Ethel Cook Eliot (Thornton Butterworth, 7s. 6d. net), may be regarded as a continuation of the story last noticed. Both books are delightfully illustrated, and though not on a high level otherwise, will, we think, be popular with children who like inferior literature, not perhaps more than the best, but certainly quite as well.

*Two-Legs*, by Carl Ewald, has already appeared in the excellent English translation by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos. This is now re-issued (Thornton Butterworth, 7s. 6d. net) with four additional chapters recounting the scientific discoveries to which 'Two-Legs' proceeded. The subject of this Danish classic is, as is well known, the early history of the human race, regarded from a point of view which seemingly owes little either to Genesis or 'The Descent of Man.'

*The Old Willow-Tree and other Stories*, by Carl Ewald (Thornton Butterworth, 7s. 6d. net), translated by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos, are, for the most part, unlike 'Two-Legs,' new to English readers, who will at once be struck by such unfamiliar features as the high value set on poplars, and the extreme rarity of mistletoe. Trees, flowers, birds and four-footed creatures live their lives and express their opinions in the pleasant style of old-world fable, but underlying all is the basis of a great naturalist's close and sure observation. The drawings, both in this book and in 'Two Legs' (by Helen M. Jacobs and G. E. Lee) are quaintly attractive.

During this reviewer's childhood, at a date which shall remain unspecified, there was current a publisher's rhyming announcement, wherein certain juvenile books were defined as consisting of "Pretty pictures, pleasing prose." The first clause of this description applies indifferent well to *Bill of the Bustingforths*, by E. A. Wyke Smith (Milford, 4s. 6d. net). But to the second we must take exception. A re-statement of fairy lore in terms of up-to-date American humour does not please us at all. But this may be only an old fogey's judgment, and each generation has a right to its own point of view.

The cruel phrase "Kensington drawing-rooms" has more than once occurred to us while endeavouring to fix upon a milieu appropriate to Miss Eleanor Farjeon's romance *Martin Pippin in the Apple Orchard* (Collins, 7s. 6d. net). We should not think it likely to be popular with children, but on this point there is no wisdom in prophesying without knowledge. Love, blameless and fantastic, is the theme, which, frankly, we have not found of engrossing interest.

Cinderella, Ricquet, the Sleeping Beauty, and other old friends "come up smiling" in *Favourite French Fairy Tales* (Harrap, 7s. 6d. net), translated once more by Barbara Douglas from three French writers of the 18th century. The costume of that period is effectively employed in the illustrations, which are all coloured. Miss Douglas apologises for the liberty she has taken with her original in allowing Red Riding Hood to escape. We are not sure that she has been wise in retaining for the hero of "Goldenlocks," the appellation "Avenant," which to most English children will (unfortunately) convey no meaning.

*Stories from Grimm* (Blackie, 2s. net), illustrated by Helen Stratton, need no introduction in this country. Miss Helen Stratton has a sense of humour by which she is much aided in interpreting a text of the kind. Eight stories are given, most of them famous.

Young children will probably enjoy *Brownie and the Grocer*, by Gladys Davidson (Blackie 9d. net) unwitting

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that this little story is copied—a long way after—from 'The Christmas Carol.' The language is very easy, and the pictures quite respectable.

*The Magic Duck and other Stories*, by Dorothy King (Blackie, 9d. net), belongs to the same series as 'Brownie' above mentioned. The subjects, which are familiar, are given a Russian setting.

*The Fearful Land of Forgets*, by S. R. Praeger (Blackie, 1s. 6d. net) is a humorous verse-tale, prettily illustrated and ostensibly designed to demonstrate the terrible calamities attendant upon a bad memory. It is well enough adapted to please readers of a very tender age.

Those "good old rhymes," which, combined with some embroideries, form the basis for *Mother Hubbard's Book of Rhymes* (Blackie, 6s. net) have given pleasure to many generations; and *pace* Mrs. Barnett, we do not think their day is over yet. (The feline violinist and her comrade of lunar-exploring fame are not included in this volume). The illustrations by Frank Adams are perhaps too much on the ugly side, but are sometimes (e.g. 'The Old Man with the Calf') delightfully humourous.

Children are sure to enjoy the cunningly devised enumeration of our principal English butterflies, their personal appearance and habits generally, which is contained in *The Butterflies' Day*, by W. H. Koebel (Thorn-ton Butterworth, 7s. 6d. net). Even adult readers should not be above acquiring knowledge by so easy and pleasant a method. The text is much assisted by numerous illustrations, some in delicate black and white, some gorgeously coloured.

*Ring-a-Ring o' Fairies*, by Madeleine Nightingale, illustrated by Charles T. Nightingale (Blackwell, 3s. net). There is both charm and beauty in this little book. The woodcut illustrations are as skilfully drawn and as fanciful as illustrations for children ought to be, and the verses are all about the things that children love to dream of.

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*Stories of Course*, by Hilda Finnemore, illustrated by George Morrow (Blackwell, 7s. 6d. net), is a jumble of plain, practical things, and some delightful nonsense. It is written in a colloquial style which should appeal to children, and they will certainly love the funny drawings by Mr. George Morrow.

*The Airplane Spider*, by Gilbert Murray, illustrated by Harrison Cady (Black, 2s. 6d. net). Laura, the Tarantula spider, is the heroine of this book, and the story of her life will interest children. Although she has been given many human attributes, including clothes, her history reflects her true environment.

*Sunnyside Farm*, by Gertrude Wallis (Daniel, Ltd., 4s. 6d. net), is a book for young children. The little stories in it are of a quiet, domestic nature, and it is

illustrated with colour and black-and-white drawings by K. W. Coates.

*Kate Greenaway Pictures*, from originals presented by her to John Ruskin and other personal friends, with an appreciation by H. M. Cundall, I.S.O., F.S.A. (Warne, 21s. net). It is delightful in these days to see drawings reproduced which show no sign of "illustrating for the press." Kate Greenaway drawings have something of the charm of dreams, wherein familiar things take on an air of very pleasant unreality. These drawings are no more interesting than her other works, and some of the smaller ones look rather forlorn in the large expanse of paper surrounding them, but many people will be glad to have the opportunity of acquiring this book.

A new edition of *A Christmas Carol*, by Charles Dickens, illustrated by Harold Copping (R.T.S., 10s. 6d. net), will be welcomed as a gift book. It is bound in a light, festive-looking cover, and is illustrated with colour plates and some excellent pen-drawings.

*Included in the Trip (a Tourist Primer for a Round Tour)*, by Reginald Cleaver (Bale, 31s. 6d. net), is principally a collection of amusing drawings, with some good advice to the intending tourist thrown in. Probably those who have already travelled will most appreciate these drawings.

*One Long Holiday*, written and illustrated by Frank Hart (Blackie, 3s. 6d. net), is the record of a stay in the country, and is obviously intended for very young children who will, we think, find it diverting.

We have nothing but praise for the humane and understanding spirit manifested in *True Stories about Animals*, by Edith Carrington (Blackie, 1s. 9d. net). Two points especially are well brought out in these anecdotes; the wonderful chivalry of "our dumb friends" towards human infants, and their, less frequent, helpfulness to one another.

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